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ABSTRACT

This document presents excerpts from position statements and resolutions of 15 U.S. and Canadian national associations on the inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular classroom and funding to support inclusion. Analysis of the position statements indicates the organizations' support for the inclusion of exceptional children in the least restrictive environment as currently stipulated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act regulations. Twelve associations support a full continuum of services, and three support full inclusion. The position of the three associations that support full inclusion is that all children with disabilities should be educated in the regular classroom, where they should receive any additional supports and services needed through collaboration of teachers, parents, and special services providers. Twelve associations support inclusion of children with disabilities in the regular classroom to the degree that it benefits the child and that the child is able to receive appropriate services there. However, they find many children with disabilities cannot have their needs met in this setting. Three tables provide further detail on the positions of the associations. The appendix contains position statements on inclusion from 14 associations. (SW)

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A Summary of Position Statements on the Inclusion of Special Education Students in the General Classroom and Excerpts on Funding from Fifteen National Associations

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March 1995

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Prepared for the American Education Finance Association annual conference, Savannah, Georgia, March 1995.

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INTRODUCTION

An analysis of position statements on the inclusion of children and youth with disabilities into the regular education classroom from 15 national associations indicates that all of these organizations support the inclusion of exceptional children into the least restrictive environment as is currently stipulated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act regulations. Twelve associations support a full continuum of services, and three support full inclusion--where all children with disabilities are educated in the regular classroom and neighborhood school.

Tables 1, 2, and 3 (attached) provided further detail on the positions of these 15 associations toward full inclusion or the full continuum of services. Table 1 lists the organizations that support 1) a full continuum of services, or 2) full inclusion. Table 2 excerpts the positions of each organization. Table 3 highlights accompanying statements regarding funding. Appendix A provides each organization's position statement on inclusion.

The position of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps (TASH), the National School Boards Association and the National Association of School Psychologists is that all children with disabilities should be educated in the regular education classroom. It is there that they should receive any additional supports and services needed. These organizations agree that the collaboration of teachers, parents, and providers of special services is needed to ensure the appropriate delivery of services to each child with disabilities in this setting.

Twelve other associations[1] support the inclusion of children with disabilities into the regular school classroom to the degree that it benefits the child, based on their unique needs, and when they are able to receive appropriate services there. However, they find many disabled children cannot have their needs met in this setting.

These associations suggest examining the continuum of services and alternative placements available for children with disabilities and then selecting the most appropriate educational environment to meet their needs. In determining the appropriate placement, most agree that the degree of training that classroom teachers have

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[1](1) American Council of the Blind, American Foundation for the Blind, Association for Education and Rehabilitation for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Canadian Council of the Blind, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, National Federation of the Blind, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (Joint Statement); (2) American Federation of Teachers; (3) Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorders; (4) Consumer Action Network of, by, and for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Americans; (5) Council of Administrators of Special Education, Inc.; (6) The Council for Exceptional Children; (7) Council for Learning Disabilities; (8) Division for Learning Disabilities of the Council for Exceptional Children; (9) Learning Disabilities Association of America; (10) National Education Association; (11) The National Education Association The Council for Exceptional Children, American Association of School Administrators (Joint Statement); (12) National Joint Committee on Learning·Disabilities.

received and the resources available to provide special services in the regular education classroom must be taken into consideration.

TABLE 1

SUMMARY OF POSITION STATEMENTS AND RESOLUTIONS ON THE INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

Support Full Inclusion	Support a Continuum of Services
o The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps	o American Council of the Blind American Foundation for the Blind Association for Education and Rehabilitation for the Blind and Visually Impaired Canadian Council of the Blind Canadian National Institute for the Blind National Federation of the Blind National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (Joint Statement)
o National Association of School Psychologists	o American Federation of Teachers
o National Association of State Boards of Education	o Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorders
	o Consumer Action Network of, by, and for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Americans
	o Council of Administrators of Special Education, Inc.
	o The Council for Exceptional Children
	o Council for Learning Disabilities
	o Division for Learning Disabilities of the Council for Exceptional Children
	o Learning Disabilities Association of America
	o National Education Association
	o National Education Association The Council for Exceptional Children American Association of School Administrators (Joint Statement)
	o National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities

TABLE 2

EXCERPTS OF POSITION STATEMENTS ON THE INCLUSION OF ALL CHILDREN IN THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

I. SUPPORT FULL INCLUSION

The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps--TASH (1993). Resolution on Inclusive Education

- inclusion - students with disabilities belong in general education classrooms and that they receive the supports and services necessary to benefit from their education in the general education setting.

National Association of School Psychologists--NASP (1993). Position Statement on Inclusive Programs for Students with Disabilities

- advocates the development of inclusive programs for students with disabilities.
- inclusive programs are those in which students, regardless of the severity of their disability, receive appropriate specialized instruction and related services within an age-appropriate general education classroom in the school that they would attend if they did not have a disability.

National Association of State Boards of Education--NASBE (n.d.). Resolution 94-6: Equal Educational Opportunities--Students with Special Needs

- inclusion means that all children must be educated in supported, heterogenous, age-appropriate, natural, child-focused school environments for the purpose of preparing them for full participation in our diverse and integrated society.

II. SUPPORT CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

American Council of the Blind/American Foundation for the Blind/Association for Education and Rehabilitation for the Blind and Visually Impaired/Blinded Veterans Association/Canadian Council of the Blind/Canadian National Institute for the Blind/National Federation of the Blind/National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (1993). Full Inclusion of Students Who Are Blind and Visually Impaired: A Position Statement

- full inclusion in regular education classrooms for all students with disabilities irrespective of individual needs is in sharp conflict with procedural guarantees of IDEA

American Federation of Teachers--AFT (1993). American Federation of Teachers Resolution: Inclusion of Students with Disabilities

- oppose inclusion - that is, any movement or program that has the goal of placing all students with disabilities in general education classrooms regardless of the nature or severity of their disabilities, their ability to behave or function appropriately in the classroom, or the educational benefits they and their general education peers can derive

Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorders--CH.A.D.D. (1993). CH.A.D.D. Position on Inclusion

- support ... a continuum ... a variety of options ... the environment ... depends on the needs of the individual student.
- inclusion defined as education which provides access to appropriate support and remediation at every level to facilitate each child's ability to participate and achieve.

Consumer Action Network of, by, and for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Americans--CAN (n.d.). Position Statement on Full Inclusion

- does not support the philosophy of full inclusion for all deaf children, youth, and young adults
- the philosophy of Full Inclusion puts undue emphasis on the physical placement of deaf children with hearing peers at the expense of the needs of deaf students philosophy of full inclusion for all deaf students is clearly in violation of IDEA

Council of Administrators of Special Education, Inc.--CASE (n.d.). Position Paper on Delivery of Services to Students with Disabilities

- believes in and supports the evolving practice of inclusion for all students as an appropriate goal of our educational community.
- believes that the decisions about an appropriate education for students must be made on an individual student basis there are those exceptions where full inclusion is not appropriate.

The Council for Exceptional Children--CEC (1993). CEC Policy on Inclusive Schools and Community Settings

- believes that a continuum of services must be available for all children, youth, and young adults concept of inclusion is a meaningful goal

Council for Learning Disabilities--CLD (1993). Concerns About the Full Inclusion of Students with Learning Disabilities in Regular Education Classrooms

- CANNOT SUPPORT ... the indiscriminate full-time placement of ALL students with LD in the regular education classroom....."full inclusion"
- SUPPORTS the education of students with LD in general education classrooms when deemed appropriate by the Individual Education Program (IEP) team

Division for Learning Disabilities (DLD) of The Council for Exceptional Children (n.d.). Inclusion: What Does It Mean for Students with Learning Disabilities?

- there is no validated body of research to support large scale adoption of inclusion as the service delivery model for ALL students with learning disabilities
- encourage the participation of students with learning disabilities in general education classes to the extent it is appropriate to their needs and provides the least restrictive environment

Learning Disabilities Association of America--LDA (1993). Position Paper on Full Inclusion of All Students with Learning Disabilities in the Regular Education Classroom

- does not support "full inclusion" or any policies that mandate the same placement, instruction, or treatment for ALL students with learning disabilities

National Education Association--NEA (n.d.). Appropriate Inclusion

- supports **appropriate inclusion** ...[which means]
  -full continuum of placement options and services
  -Individualized Education Program
  -appropriate professional development
  -coordinated and collaborative planning
  -class size
  -staff and technical assistance

National Education Association--NEA/The Council for Exceptional Children--CEC/American Association of School Administrators--AASA (1987). NEA--CEC--AASA Statement on the Relationship Between Special Education and General Education

- encourage appropriate inclusion characterized by a full continuum of placement options and services appropriate education for an exceptional child must be individually determined
- some children with exceptionalities can benefit from the instruction provided by general education, but many exceptional children are not able to benefit from some or all of such instruction because of their unique learning styles or because they require a differentiated curriculum

National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (1993). A Reaction to Full Inclusion: A Reaffirmation of the Right of Students with Learning Disabilities to a Continuum of Services

- cannot support ... the idea that all students with learning disabilities must be served only in regular education classrooms, frequently referred to as full inclusion
- full inclusion ... violates the rights of parents and students with disabilities as mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

TABLE 3

EXCERPTS ON FUNDING FOUND IN POSITION STATEMENTS ON THE INCLUSION OF ALL CHILDREN IN THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

American Council of the Blind/American Foundation for the Blind/Association for Education and Rehabilitation for the Blind and Visually Impaired/Blinded Veterans Association/Canadian Council of the Blind/Canadian National Institute for the Blind/National Federation of the Blind/National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (1993). Full Inclusion of Students Who Are Blind and Visually Impaired: A Position Statement

- Educational decisions should not be made simply on the basis of philosophy, limited school budget, administrative convenience, or concerns about socialization

American Federation of Teachers--AFT (1993). American Federation of Teachers Resolution: Inclusion of Students with Disabilities

- WHEREAS two years before the twentieth anniversary of the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142), Congress' continuing cynicism in funding the mandates of the law at under 10 percent of costs instead of the 40 percent promised has compromised schools' ability to provide appropriate services to students with disabilities, and has placed even greater strains on education generally by requiring that higher and higher percentages of funding go to special education.

- WHEREAS inclusion is being adopted by a large number of local school boards, state departments of education, legislators, and other policymakers all over the country as a means to save money by placing all students with disabilities in general education classrooms and curtailing special education supports and services.

- RESOLVED that the AFT seek with its allies to reopen P.L. 94- 142 and IDEA, convincing Congress both to recognize in the law the high costs and complex problems of special education, and to respond by providing ... full funding for all of its mandates.

The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps--TASH (1993). Resolution on Inclusive Education

- Creative ways to allocate special and general education resources, with funding obstacles removed.

Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorders--CH.A.D.D. (1993). CH.A.D.D. Position on Inclusion

- Maintenance of the integrity of funding streams for special education to ensure that we do not return to the days when a public school could tell a parent of a child with a disability that the school cannot "afford" to provide special education and related services.

Consumer Action Network of, by, and for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Americans--CAN (n.d.). Position Statement on Full Inclusion

- The cost of interpreting services can be quite high and even greater that the salary of a teacher. This makes it financially demanding on school systems.

- CAN believes that without the ability to provide adequate funding, necessary professional training, and staff to meet the individual needs of all deaf children, youth and young adults within a regular educational environment, it is impossible to provide an appropriate education for all deaf children in the regular class even if all the deaf students were academically, socially, and emotionally capable of this placement.

Council of Administrators of Special Education, Inc.--CASE (n.d.). Position Paper on Delivery of Services to Students with Disabilities

(no statements involving funding)

The Council for Exceptional Children--CEC (1993). CEC Policy on Inclusive Schools and Community Settings

- ... policy makers should fund programs in nutrition, early intervention, health care, parent education, and other social support programs that prepare all children, youth, and young adults to do well in school. There can be no meaningful school reform, nor inclusive schools, without funding of these key prerequisites

Council for Learning Disabilities--CLD (1993). Concerns About the Full Inclusion of Students with Learning Disabilities in Regular Education Classrooms

(no statements involving funding)

Division for Learning Disabilities (DLD) of The Council for Exceptional Children (n.d.). Inclusion: What Does It Mean for Students with Learning Disabilities?

- Many state and local budget allocations and reimbursements are categorical, based on the recognition that students with learning disabilities often require specialized programs, personnel, and resources.

Learning Disabilities Association of America--LDA (1993). Position Paper on Full Inclusion of All Students with Learning Disabilities in the Regular Education Classroom

(no statements involving funding)

National Association of School Psychologists--NASP (1993). Position Statement on Inclusive Programs for Students with Disabilities

- ... school psychologists are in a unique position to assist schools in assessing student needs, reallocation existing resources, and restructuring service delivery systems to better meet the educational and mental health needs of all students.
- Changes are required in ...[t]he current special education funding system. The link between funding and placements must be served. Many aspects of the funding system are driven by labels and program locations rather than by student needs.
- ... ensure that students with special needs continue to receive appropriate resources.

National Association of State Boards of Education--NASBE (n.d.). Resolution 94-6: Equal Educational Opportunity--Students with Special Needs

(no funding statements included)

National Education Association--NEA (n.d.). Appropriate Inclusion

(no funding statements included)

National Education Association--NEA/The Council for Exceptional Children--CEC/American Association of School Administrators--AASA (1987). NEA--CEC--AASA Statement on the Relationship Between Special Education and General Education

- ... limited special education resources are resulting in increased class sizes and case loads.....
- Recognizing the unique role the federal government plays in this regard, we call upon the federal government to focus its resources on supporting the training of special education and related services personnel who meet state and professionally recognized standards; conducting research and development activities leading to the availability of improved technology, media, and materials that can be used effectively by special education and related services personnel; and increasing its financial obligations to the support of special education services.

National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (1993). A Reaction to Full Inclusion: A Reaffirmation of the Right of Students with Learning Disabilities to a Continuum of Services

(no statements involving funding)

Appendix A

POSITION STATEMENTS ON INCLUSION[1]

[1]Several position statements were taken from: Kauffman, James M. and Hallahan, Daniel P. (1995). The Illusion of Full Inclusion. Austin, TX: PRO-ED, Inc., Appendix.

FULL INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WHO ARE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED: A POSITION STATEMENT

prepared by the American Council of the Blind, the American Foundation for the Blind, the Association for Education and Rehabilitation for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the Blinded Veterans Association, the Canadian Council of the Blind, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the National Federation of the Blind, and the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

"Full Inclusion," a philosophical concept currently advanced by a number of educators is not a federal legal requirement in special education law. Proponents of "full inclusion" nevertheless take the position that all students with disabilities must receive their total instruction in the regular public school classroom regardless of individual needs. Unfortunately, "full inclusion" would eliminate all special placements, including "pull out" services, resource rooms and specialized schools. Such an arrangement would be seriously detrimental to the educational development of many students with disabilities.

We, the national organizations of and for the blind listed here are firmly committed to appropriate educational opportunities designed to provide students with the competencies necessary to ensure full participation in society. It is significant to recognize that our field was the first to develop a broad range of special education options beginning with specialized schools as early as 1829, and extending to public schools programs since 1900. These options have provided critically important educational preparation for several generations of highly successful and independent blind people. Based on this long and impressive record of success in making optimal use of both special and public school programs to meet the diverse needs of blind students, we strongly agree upon the following:

- If provided with timely and adequate specialized services by appropriately certified teachers, students who are blind or visually impaired can develop skills that will enable them to achieve success and independence as responsible citizens in a fully integrated society. If these students do not receive appropriate instruction designed to develop competencies that meet the sensory deficits of blindness and low vision, critical learning opportunities will be lost, thus diminishing the potential for future accomplishments. In this context, ample opportunities for instruction in such areas as braille, abacus, orientation and mobility, and use of prescribed optical devices must be made available to students, as needed.

- Educational decisions must be made on a case by case basis consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which guarantees a Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) from among a Full Continuum of Alternative Placements based on the

Individual Education Plan for each student. Educational decisions should not be made simply on the basis of philosophy, limited school budgets, administrative convenience, or concerns about socialization.

- Full inclusion in regular education classrooms for all students with disabilities irrespective of individual needs is in sharp conflict with procedural guarantees of IDEA.

- Least Restrictive Environment and Full Continuum of Alternative Placements are critically important IDEA provisions. LRE is not one sole physical location. It is, rather, a principle, which if properly applied, matches the need of the student with an appropriate school setting which provides meaningful challenges, realistic expectations, and maximum opportunities for achievement and development of a healthy self-esteem.

- The regular education classroom may be considered the LRE if the student possesses sufficient readiness and survival skills and can be provided adequate supports, specialized services (from personnel trained in education of the visually impaired), and opportunities to develop skills commensurate with his or her potential. Extreme caution must be exercised so that full inclusion does not result in "full submersion," social isolation, "lowered" self-esteem, poor performance, or a setting in which services are unavailable.

- In cases where the needs of the student cannot be met in the regular classrooms, an alternative education placement must be provided and be recognized as the LRE for that particular student. Such alternative placements should not be negatively viewed as discriminatory or as "segregated" settings when legitimately warranted to develop the needed skills for future integration in school and society.

- Since it has been clearly demonstrated that blind children benefit from interacting with disabled and nondisabled children, both interaction opportunities should be fully encouraged in whatever setting that is considered appropriate. We believe that the mandate in IDEA which states that, "to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities [should be] educated with children who are nondisabled," does not intend that blind children avoid interaction with each other.

We strongly urge that decision makers carefully consider and be sensitive to the impact of reform initiatives on the education of students with visual disabilities. Caution must be exercised to insure that educational philosophy and trends such as full inclusion do not seriously endanger appropriate and specialized services for students who are blind and visually impaired. If properly implemented, IDEA can provide legal safeguards to insure that all individual children can realize their full potential for independence and success.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS RESOLUTION
INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Adopted by the AFT Executive Council on October 27, 1993

AFT Resolution on the policy known variously as inclusion, full integration of students with disabilities, the regular education initiative, unified system, or inclusive education.

WHEREAS there is no legal mandate or consistent definition for "inclusion," let it be known that for AFT policy we define inclusion as the placement of all students with disabilities in general education classrooms without regard to the nature or severity of the students' disabilities, their ability to behave and function appropriately in the classroom, or the educational benefits they can derive.

WHEREAS the mission of the public schools and of the AFT is to provide high standards, rich and challenging classroom experiences, and maximum achievement for ALL students, including students with disabilities as well as non-disabled students in general education classes;

WHEREAS two years before the twentieth anniversary of the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P.L.94-142), Congress' continuing cynicism in funding the mandates of the law at under 10 percent of costs instead of the 40 percent promised has compromised schools' ability to provide appropriate services to students with disabilities, and has placed even greater strains on education generally by requiring that higher and higher percentages of funding go to special education;

WHEREAS inclusion is being championed as the only placement for all students with disabilities by a movement of some advocacy groups--in the face of opposition from the parents of many students with disabilities and many respected advocated for the disabled--when there is no clear evidence that inclusion is appropriate or provides an educational benefit for all students with disabilities, and no clear evidence of its benefit for the other students;

WHEREAS there are deep concerns about the high percentage of minority children in some classes for students with disabilities, and inclusion is viewed by some advocates and parents as the only means of getting minority children out of those classes;

WHEREAS inclusion is being adopted by a large number of local schools boards, state departments of education, legislators, and other policymakers all over the country as a means to save money by placing all students with disabilities in general education classrooms and curtailing special education supports and services;

WHEREAS even when students with disabilities are appropriately placed, general and special education staff who work with them are not receiving the training they need that they are entitled to by law;

WHEREAS the federal law and court decisions forbid school districts from removing disruptive students with disabilities from programs for more than 10 days a year, and require that, in the absence of school district and parental consent to an interim placement or a court order, such students "stay put" in the class while their placement is being evaluated and adjudicated;

WHEREAS the existing federal legislation limits the ability of teachers to challenge legally inappropriate placements of student with disabilities in general education classrooms;

WHEREAS insufficient medical personnel are employed by school districts to care for medically fragile children under existing circumstances, and inclusion would place these students in medical danger and increase the responsibilities of teachers and paraprofessionals;

WHEREAS inclusion threatens to overwhelm schools and systems that are already extremely vulnerable--particularly in areas with great poverty and social needs--by placing additional responsibilities on teachers, paraprofessionals, and support professionals, thus threatening the ability of schools to meet the educational needs of all students;

WHEREAS students with disabilities have frequently been placed in programs that failed to serve their needs to meet high educational standards, fueling the desire of their parents to have their children in general education classrooms even when such placements are not appropriate;

RESOLVED that the AFT continue to seek high, national achievement standards for education, applicable to ALL students, disabled and non-disabled alike;

RESOLVED that the AFT oppose inclusion--that is, any movement or program that has the goal of place all students with disabilities in general education classrooms regardless of the nature or severity of their disabilities, their ability to behave or function appropriately in the classroom, or the educational benefits they and their general education peers can derive;

RESOLVED that the AFT denounce the appalling administrative practices that have accompanied the inclusion movement. These include, but are not limited to, placing too many students with disabilities in individual general classrooms; placing students with disabilities in general education classrooms without services, professional development, or paraprofessional assistance; refusing

to assist teachers who are having problems meeting the unique needs of students with disabilities; and changing IEPs **en masse** so that students with disabilities may by placed general education classrooms without supports and services and irrespective of the appropriateness of the placement;

RESOLVED that the AFT seek with its allies to reopen P.L.94-142 and IDEA, convincing Congress both to recognize in the law the high costs and complex problems of special education, and to respond by providing:

1. full funding for all of its mandates;

2. a 5-year reauthorization of the laws for education students with disabilities--just as every other education act requires--to realize the benefits of new hearings and discussions of problems that arise;

3. the legal right for teachers to attend the IEP meetings of children they teach; the right to appeal inappropriate placements; and the right to be fully represented during due process hearings without reprisal, i.e., intimidation, coercion, or retaliation, for being a child advocate; and the right to be involved in the assessment of delivery of services, staff training, and availability of resources to ensure the effectiveness of the program as intended by Congress;

4. the reauthorization and enforcement of the continuum of placements, which includes mainstreaming as an existing alternative strategy within the range of services for students with disabilities;

5. that criteria for placement in general education require the proximate ability of students to function appropriately both academically and behaviorally when supplementary aids and services are provided by the district;

6. support for districts in maintaining consistent discipline policies for ALL students who disrupt classrooms or engage in dangerous behavior;

7. removal of the 'stay put" provision, thus allowing districts to make responsible alternative arrangements for disruptive and/or dangerous students during the appeals process;

8. reauthorization of and insistence on comprehensive professional development;

9. negation of court decisions concerning students with disabilities which are detrimental to educational programs--such as the "stay put' provision, limitations on the discipline of students with disabilities, and decisions that favor inclusion;

10. for limitations on the number of students with disabilities in self-contained and general classrooms;

RESOLVED that the AFT seek with its allies to address the problem of the high percentages of minority students in special education; and

RESOLVED that the AFT renew our longstanding commitment to meeting the needs of ALL students for high standards, rich and challenging classroom experience, and maximum achievement, whatever their educational placements might be.

RESOLUTION ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Prepared by The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps(TASH)

Preamble

The United States Congress, in passing the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990, found that there were approximately 43 million American with disabilities and found that these individuals had been isolated and segregated, faced restrictions and limitations, occupied an inferior status and had been seriously disadvantaged. The implications of this situation have been evident in the field of education.

Resolution

WHEREAS the democratic ideals of American society can be best served and protected when diversity is highly valued and seen as the norm in all schools; when all students are viewed as active, fully participating members of the school community; and when the reciprocal benefits of full inclusion for all students is understood and celebrated;

BE IT RESOLVED that TASH reaffirms a definition of inclusion that beings with the educational and moral imperative that students with disabilities belong in general education classrooms and that they receive the supports and services necessary to benefit from their education in the general education setting. Inclusion proceeds to and is fully defined by a new way of thinking based upon current understandings about how all children and young people are educated--a new way of thinking that embraces a sociology of acceptance of all children into the school community as active, fully participating members; that views diversity as the norm and maintains a high quality education for each student by assuring effective teaching, powerful pedagogies and necessary supports to each child in the general education setting.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that TASH calls upon local, state, provincial, regional and federal governments, as well as all related organizations, to stand accountable for the development and maintenance of educational opportunities for all students that are fully inclusive and ultimately effective; and that the United States Government be urged to vigorously enforce, at all levels, legislation already enacted that assures such accountability, development and maintenance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that TASH recognizes the many highly successful inclusionary practices already in place in classrooms, schools, and school districts across the nation and beyond, and calls upon all those who can make a difference to combine their efforts in a cooperative manner to support and celebrate these efforts and at the same time continue to work as agents of change to bring inclusion to all those who have not yet experienced this new way of thinking.

Research findings and documented experience offer overwhelming support for the following components as essential to the creation of fully inclusive schools:

General

- Teaching which uses heterogeneous groupings and a variety of age-appropriate instructional strategies based upon students' learning needs and which emphasize active learning strategies;
- High expectations for all students and teachers who treat each student as a uniquely important individual;
- Program philosophy which emphasizes the value of diversity, multiculturalism, social inclusion and belonging for everyone;
- Access for all students to campuses and classrooms, including co-curricular and extracurricular activities, that are free from prejudice and other physical and psychological barriers;
- Comprehensive, sensible and culturally competent curricula which are effective for the full range of learners;
- Opportunities for all secondary school students to participate in work study or other community and/or job skill development programs which will not negatively impact participation and full membership in the high school community;

Assessment

- Thorough analysis of the learning needs of all students;
- Broad use of unbiased and culturally sensitive assessment procedures that enhance students' strengths and assist in the identification of their needs;
- Accountability for achievement which is based on each student's personal potential and educational experience;

Communication

- Emphasis on the importance of family involvement and home-school communication structures that are culturally responsive and which empower families;
- Conscious creation of a strong sense of community and fostering of mutual respect and support among education staff, parents, and students;
- Collaboration among teachers, other personnel, family members, students, and peers to plan and deliver educational services;

- Well-delineated processes for problem-solving as defined by the family, student, and classmates;

Staff Development

- Teacher training programs that are inclusive and collaborative of general and special education teachers so that all teachers will be prepared to teach all students effectively;

- Necessary and appropriate staff development programs for teachers and related services staff which will develop the necessary new understanding beliefs, skills, and behaviors;

Supports

- The necessary and appropriate supports and services to provide all students with opportunity for success;

- A broad range of support services (e.g., speech, reading, occupational therapy, assistive technology) which are closely coordinated with the general education classroom's goals and activities and which are provided in general education settings; and

- Creative ways to allocate special and general education resources, with funding obstacles removed.

Resolved on this day, December 17, 1993.

CH.A.D.D. POSITION ON INCLUSION

Adopted by CH.A.D.D. (Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorders) National Board of Directors on May 4, 1993

CH.A.D.D. believes that every child in America is entitled to a free and appropriate public education. The needs of many children are adequately met through regular education and placement in the regular classroom. There are times, however, when regular education is not sufficient to ensure that all children succeed in school. Access to a continuum of special education placements and services is especially important for many children with disabilities. This ensures their right to receive a free and appropriate public education designed to meet their unique needs and which facilitates their achievement in school.

There was a time in America when a free and appropriate public education was not guaranteed by law. Indeed, it was not all that long ago that children with undetected disabilities languished unnoticed in classrooms, and parents of children could not be educated in the public schools because no special education services were available. That all changed with the passage in 1975 of Public Law 94-142 which CH.A.D.D. considers to be a benchmark in meeting the educational needs of all children.

Since renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), this landmark legislation, among other things, mandates:

- a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment designed to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities;
- the right to a comprehensive, multidisciplinary assessment;
- a team approved Individualized Education Program (IEP) that includes current functioning levels, instructional goals and objectives, placement and services decisions, and procedures for evaluation of program effectiveness;
- the availability of a continuum of special education services and placements appropriate to the child's specific learning needs; and
- procedural safeguards to ensure the rights of children with disabilities and their parents are protected.

The principles embodied in the IDEA are as valid today as they were when P.L. 94-142 was passed eighteen years ago. The problems facing the education of children with disabilities in public schools are not the result of the Act, but rather its incomplete implementation. While it may be true that there are some children

who are being excluded from the regular education classroom without sufficient reason, it is equally true that many children with attention deficit disorders (ADD) and other disabilities continue to be denied access to an appropriate range of special education and related services and settings.

We believe that the concept of inclusion should reflect today's commitment that every child be educated in the environment that is most appropriate to that child's identified needs. CH.A.D.D. supports inclusion defined as education which provides access to appropriate support and remediation at every level to facilitate each child's ability to participate and achieve. The environment in which these services can best be delivered depends on the needs of the individual student.

Many children with disabilities are educated successfully in regular classrooms with appropriate accommodations and supports. However, others require alternative environments to optimize their achievement. CH.A.D.D. supports this continuum of services and placements. As state and federal governments proceed with the reform of public education, they must ensure that schools continue to be required to accommodate to the individual needs of children with disabilities by providing a variety of options in support of the right of each child to a free and appropriate education.

Children with attention deficit disorders, like children with other disabilities, can exhibit a range of impairment, thus requiring a continuum of educational services. For some children with attention deficit disorders, screening and prereferral adaptation in the classroom may be all that is needed. For others, it will be necessary to refer for a more comprehensive assessment which could lead to a formalized IEP process. Children with attention deficit disorders have diverse needs and will require enhanced teacher preparation in identification, as well as the planning and implementation of a variety of intervention and instructional strategies.

As Congress debates education reform, let it not lose sight of the integrity of the principles embodied in IDEA. Specifically, we recommend:

- a continued recognition of the importance of the availability of a continuum of special education services and placement settings designed to meet the individual needs of each child with a disability;

- increased monitoring of the mandated practices and procedural protections contained within the IDEA to ensure better compliance with the law;

- maintenance of the integrity of funding streams for special education to ensure that we do not return to the days when a public school could tell a parent of a child with a disability that the school cannot "afford" to provide special education and related services;

- a renewed commitment to preservice and inservice teacher training and staff development so that all educators can competently recognize the educational needs of all students and, when necessary, make appropriate accommodations and referrals for comprehensive assessments; and

- stronger collaboration between regular and special education teachers.

Adherence to the principles embodied in IDEA will ensure that all children are included in the federal mandate for a free and appropriate public education. We welcome the opportunity to continue to be a part of the education reform movement.

POSITION STATEMENT ON FULL INCLUSION

prepared by the Consumer Action Network of, by, and for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Americans

I. The Consumer Action Network (CAN)

The Consumer Action Network (CAN) is a coalition of national organizations of, by and for deaf and hard of hearing people. Founded in March 1993, CAN addresses advocacy and legislative issues of importance to deaf and hard of hearing persons. Such issues include shaping public policy, ensuring the rights of deaf and hard-of-hearing persons and improving their quality of life; empowerment of consumer leadership and self-representation; and equal educational, employment, health and technology access.

II. The Problem: The Full Inclusion Educational Model Does Not Meet the Educational Needs of Deaf Children

A. Implications of Deafness

A hearing loss can have a devastating effect on an individual's ability to participate in a regular educational environment and in society. Being deaf creates a communication difference. Deaf people, as a result of their hearing loss, are visually oriented individuals, and may have considerable difficult participating in an environment that relies primarily on sounds to communicate and learn. Deaf people use many different approaches to communicate. No two deaf people are alike. It is incorrect to assume that all deaf people can be taught to lipread or all deaf people can be taught to speak or use hearing aids. It is also incorrect to assume that becoming fluent in sigh language is easy and can be accomplished in a few months. Some people who are deaf use American Sign Language (ASL). Others use a combination of sign language and speech. While some deaf people are able to lipread t some degree, many cannot do so. CAN believes that every deaf person has the right to use whatever communication style best suits him or her in a given situation.

The difficulties associated with educating deaf students in a regular educational environment were recently discussed in a federal policy guidance for deaf students (Federal Register, October 30, 1992).

> The disability of deafness often results in significant and unique educational needs for the individual child. The major barriers to learning associated with deafness relate to language and communication, which in turn profoundly affect most aspects of the educational process.

Because deafness is a low incidence disability, there is not a widespread understanding of its educational implications, even among special educators. This lack of knowledge contributes to the already substantial barriers to deaf students in receiving appropriate educational services.

CAN believes that regardless of which educational placement option is chosen, it is vital to meet the communication needs of each individual child, youth or young adult.

CAN believes that, in addition to addressing the communication needs of all deaf children, the educational placement decision must consider the cultural background of the deaf student. One of these cultural features is the use of ASL for language and communication. ASL is a visual language with its own rules of syntax and grammar.

Deaf culture is also expressed through theater, sports, and poetry. Works of art by deaf people often express pride in being deaf as they struggle to gain equal footing with their hearing peers.

When deaf people are among their peers there is no feeling of being left out or missing critical aspects of communication. Communication is much more easily accomplished and the cultural aspects are both understood and accepted. If a person could hear and was not fluent in sign language was placed with a group of deaf people, that person would immediately experience isolation. The situation, not the hearing loss, creates the barrier to effective and fluent communication.

CAN believes that a large majority of regular classroom teachers are not able to fully understand and therefore, cannot adequately address these cultural aspects of being deaf. In sum, a Full Inclusion Model will impede development of some deaf children's cultural needs.

B. The Full Inclusion Model and the Educational Requirements of Deaf Children

In schools that use the Full Inclusion Model, all students, regardless of their hearing loss, are placed with their hearing peers in the "home" school or regular educational class. The emphasis is on the physical placement of the student in the community school with an informal support system rather than on providing a full spectrum of services. Specifically, it is assumed that the regular classroom teacher will be able to educate and communicate with these deaf children. It is also assumed that hearing peers will be able to communicate with the deaf students in a positive manner. People in support of full inclusion believe that the emphasis in placement decisions for students should be on choice-based approaches rather than on an individualized assessment and planning process. Further, those who are supportive of full

inclusion believe that placement of students in a separate school, such as schools for the deaf, or separate classrooms within regular educational programs, segregates and is therefore unacceptable.

CAN believes that the philosophy of Full Inclusion puts undue emphasis on the physical placement of deaf children with hearing peers at the expense of the needs of deaf students. Placement of deaf students without consideration for their communication, cultural, academic, social, and emotional needs would result in turning a potential ability situation into a disability situation.

C. The Full Inclusion Model and Its Legality

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a free appropriate education must be provided in accordance with individualized education plan requirements.

Section 300.551 requires that each public agency ensure that a continuum of alternative placements is available to meet the needs of handicapped children for special education and related services. The continuum required must include instruction in regular classes,
special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions, and make provisions for supplementary services (such as resource room or itinerant instruction to be provided in conjunction with regular class placements).

Section 300.552(d) requires that each public agency ensure that in selecting the least restrictive environment, consideration is given to any potential harmful effect on the child or on the quality of services he or she needs.

CAN believes that the philosophy of full inclusion for all deaf students is clearly in violation of IDEA since it does not ensure the availability of a continuum of alternative placements. Many deaf and hard of hearing students cannot progress satisfactorily in a regular education environment even with the use of supplementary aids and services. The emphasis for deaf children, youth and young adults should be on providing "satisfactory" education, not simply placing them with their hearing peers. Educational placement of deaf students in regular classrooms without consideration of communication needs may cause undue academic, social, emotional and cultural damage.

CAN believes that if the federal government really wanted to require education for all deaf children in the regular educational environment, then the regulations under 34 CFR 300.551-.552(d) related to ensuring a continuum of alternative placements and considering harmful effects in placing students in the least restrictive environment would not have been needed. These two sections are used to balance the preference of regular classroom

placement with the realization that certain individuals should not be educated in that setting.

CAN believes that for some deaf children, whose communication and cultural needs cannot be met in the regular educational setting, the school for the deaf may be considered the appropriate placement as determined on the basis of the IEP. Local school systems should be encouraged to develop their programs around the needs of children and not force students into inflexible programs. Each placement recommendation should emphasize opportunity for exemplary development. Accordingly, placement decisions are based on the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) which should include:

1. Academic, social, cultural and emotional needs;

2. Severity of hearing loss and potential for using residual hearing;

3. Curriculum content and method of curriculum delivery;

4. Need for special services; and

5. Current, preferred, and most appropriate mode of communication.

Once the IEP has been developed by professionals, parents, and when appropriate, students knowledgeable about deaf related issues and needs of the particular child, the placement decision can be made. This placement decision must consider whether the appropriate trained personnel are available to implement it.

D. The Full Inclusion Model and the Lack of Appropriate Educational Resources

CAN believes that the majority of regular education teachers are both unprepared and unequipped to deal with the multitude of needs for deaf children. Special education teachers often do not receive adequate training necessary to meet the full range of communication needs of deaf children. A person with a master's degree in special education, for example, may have never interacted with deaf people or be aware of the different communication options that deaf people may use.

CAN recognizes that there are not enough interpreters in the United States and that interpreting services do not guarantee education for all deaf children. The cost of interpreting services can be quite high and even greater than the salary of a teacher. This makes it financially demanding on school systems. Education departments in some states have not even established personnel standards for educational interpreters in the same manner that standards have been established for speech pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, etc. As a result,

many interpreters employed in public educational settings do not meet the minimum standards for educational interpreters established and endorsed by the American Society for Deaf Children (ASDC), Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf (AGBAD), Association of College Educators-Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ACE-DHH), Conference of Educational Administrators Serving the Deaf (CEASD), Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT), Convention of American Instructors of the Deaf (CAID), National Association of the Deaf (NAD), and the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). Thus, even students who have the ability to use interpreters effectively are often missing information critical to their academic, social and emotional performance in the regular educational environment. In addition, not every deaf student knows how to use interpreters effectively. To a large degree, the education acquired by a deaf child in full inclusion settings may depend not so much on the deaf student's ability, but rather on the ability of teachers, interpreters and other service providers to communicate clearly and effectively.

CAN believes that without the ability to provide adequate funding, necessary professional training, and staff to meet the individual needs of all deaf children, youth and young adults within a regular educational environment, it is impossible to provide an appropriate education for all deaf children in the regular class even if all the deaf students were academically, socially, and emotionally capable of this placement.

III. Position Statement

It is the position of the Consumer Action Network (CAN) that all deaf children, youth and young adults are entitled to a continuum of educational placements. This includes residential and day programs for deaf students, center schools in public education environments, self contained classes within a public school setting, and other educational placements that are deemed appropriate, based on a thorough assessment of each child's unique abilities. The educational placement decision for deaf children, youth and young adults should take into consideration each individual's communication, academic, social, emotional and cultural needs. CAN urges that students, parents, families, and professionals recommending the educational placement option take into consideration all of the necessary factors and the desired outcomes to be pursued. Further, CAN believes that, deaf adults, while having the same desired outcomes and careers as those of their hearing peers, cannot attain these goals unless their education places appropriate emphasis on the unique communication and cultural needs that deafness presents.

It is the position of CAN that education in a local public school setting will not meet the individual needs of ALL deaf children, youth and young adults. CAN believes that programming of this type will not meet the unique communication, culture,

academic, social and emotional needs of all deaf children. In addition, CAN also recognizes that there is a severe shortage of trained personnel, including teachers familiar with the implications that deafness presents and qualified interpreters to facilitate communication.

IV. Conclusion

The position paper addresses the needs of deaf children, youth and young adults in an educational environment--needs that can only be addressed by consumers, parents, students (when appropriate) and professionals involved in the education of the deaf. CAN does not support the philosophy of full inclusion for all deaf children, youth and young adults. CAN believes that educational placements based on a Full Inclusion Model are unable to meet the unique communication, cultural, academic, social and emotional needs of all deaf children, youth and young adults because of the latitude of services needed. Thus, for many deaf children, youth and young adults, full inclusion placements present inordinate barriers in terms of providing appropriate education and allowing individual pursuit of careers of their choices.

Note. Founding members of CAN: American Association of the Deaf-Blind, American Athletic Association of the Deaf, American Society for Deaf Children, Association of Late Deafened Adults, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Entrepreneurs Council, Deaf Women United, Inc., National Association of the Deaf, National Black Deaf Advocates, National Congress of the Jewish Deaf, National Fraternal Society of the Deaf, National Hispanic Council of Deaf and Hard of Hearing People, Telecommunications for the Deaf, Inc.

POSITION PAPER ON DELIVERY OF SERVICES TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

prepared by the Council of Administrators of Special Education, Inc.

Introduction

During the past year, numerous requests have been received from the members for the Council of Administrators of Special Education, Inc. (CASE) to issue an update to the position paper on the subject of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) as it relates to the topic of full inclusion of students with disabilities. The CASE Strategic Plan indicates CASE "will establish position statements that are reflective of the issues generated by the membership." This paper is therefore being written in response to the CASE Strategic Plan and membership requests.

All students, both disabled and nondisabled, have educational needs which must be met. CASE believes public schools should be held accountable for meeting the educational needs of all students.

The development and establishment of special education programs in the United States has been an evolutionary process over several decades. Each incremental stage in the process has led to increased knowledge and implementation of the best practices known and available for the times and to corresponding adjustments in the belief systems and attitude held by the educational community. The LRE requirement in the special education regulations has led the education system to establish a continuum of educational placements (environments) over the past two decades. A "special" education system was implemented that came to operate parallel to the general education system within public education.

Currently, rather than a focus upon the environment, a focus upon levels of scope and intensity of educational services (least restrictive alternatives) is considered appropriate. Special education (specially designed instruction) is not a site or setting, but a service delivery system that is responsive to the unique needs of each child. The educational community is increasingly advocating for a more "inclusive" public education system for ALL children. The result is an evolving philosophy and practice of inclusionary programming for our nations's students with disabilities

Inclusion Rationale

Inclusion is the result of a major shift in the historic beliefs and practices of educational communities regarding the provision of services to children and youth with disabilities. Inclusion means that students with disabilities are educated in supported, heterogeneous, age-appropriate, and natural and student-centered classroom, school and community environments for the

purpose of preparing them for full participation in a diverse and integrated society. The practice of inclusion transcends the idea of physical locations and incorporates basic values that promote participation, friendships and interactions in all aspects of education and community life.

The CASE position in the Least Restrictive Environment position paper was: "CASE does not support inclusion as a policy/practice in which ALL students with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities and needs for related services, receive their total education within the regular classroom setting in the school they would attend if not disabled." CASE does support, however, the evolving practice of inclusion as an appropriate goal of a unified education system for ALL students.

The implementation of inclusion requires:

- development of a local board policy supporting inclusion:
- a goal of participatory membership for all students;
- sufficient supports to students and staff;
- effective leadership, commitments, and a shared responsibility for all students;
- active partnerships with parents;
- appropriate pre-service and ongoing inservice training for all staff;
- curriculum and methods which are adapted for individual needs;
- a strong sense of "community" in the classroom, throughout the school and with parents/caregivers;
- the study and celebration of diversity; and
- the ultimate establishment of a unified education system responsible for serving ALL students.

An inclusive education provides benefits for all students. Inclusive schools will assist in the development of future citizens who value all people, regardless of their learning, physical or emotional characteristics. The best preparation for adult life in a diverse society is education in a diverse classroom. Of particular benefit to students with special needs will be:

- opportunities for friendship and a true sense of belonging;
- the natural availability of role models;
- facilitation of language and communication skills development;

o the development of appropriate social skills.

Position

CASE believes in and supports the evolving practice of inclusion for all students as an appropriate goal of our educational community. CASE believes that the decisions about an appropriate education for students must be made on an individual student basis. While there are those exceptions where full in is not appropriate, we believe strongly in the goal in including ALL children with disabilities into their own school and community. This necessitates a shift in the focus of the IEP teams from the place for a student to the intensity and scope of services that a student needs to be appropriately educated.

CASE encourages all professionals involved in developing and/or providing educational services to endorse the position stated in this paper.

(subject to revision)

THE COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

CEC POLICY ON INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY SETTINGS

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) believes all children, youth, and young adults with disabilities are entitled to a free and appropriate education and/or services that lead to an adult life characterized by satisfying relations with others, independent living, productive engagement in the community, and participation in society at large. To achieve such outcomes, there must exist for all children, youth, and young adults a rich variety of early intervention, educational, and vocational program options and experiences. Access to these programs and experiences should be based on individual educational need and desired outcomes. Further more, students and their families or guardians, as members of the planning team, may recommend the placement, curriculum, option, and the exit document to be pursued.

CEC believes that a continuum of services must be available for all children, youth, and young adults. CEC also believes that the concept of inclusion is a meaningful goal to be pursued in our schools and communities. In addition, CEC believes children, youth, and young adults with disabilities should be served whenever possible in general education classrooms in inclusive neighborhood schools and community settings. Such settings should be strengthened and supported by an infusion of specially trained personnel and other appropriate supportive practices according to the individual needs of the child.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Schools. In inclusive schools, the building administrator and staff with assistance from the special education administration should be primarily responsible for the education of children, youth, and young adults with disabilities. The administrator(s) and other school personnel must have available to them appropriate support and technical assistance to enable them to fulfill their responsibilities. Leaders in state/provincial and local governments must redefine rules and regulations as necessary, and grant school personnel greater authority to make decisions regarding curriculum, materials, instructional practice, and staffing patterns. In return for greater autonomy, the school administrator and staff should establish high standards for each child and youth and should be held accountable for his or her progress toward outcomes.

Communities. Inclusive schools must be located in inclusive communities; therefore, CEC invites all educators, other professionals, and family members to work together to create early intervention, education, and vocational programs and experiences that are collegial, inclusive, and responsive to the diversity of

children, youth, and young adults. Policy makers at the highest levels of state/provincial and local government, as well as school administration, also must support inclusion in the educational reforms they espouse. Further, the policy makers should fund programs in nutrition, early intervention, health care, parent education, and other social support programs that prepare all children, youth, and young adults to do well in school. There can be no meaningful school reform, nor inclusive schools, without funding of these key prerequisites. As important, there must be interagency agreements and collaboration with local governments and business to help prepare students to assume a constructive role in an inclusive community.

Professional Development. Finally, state/provincial departments of education, local educational districts, and colleges and universities must provide high-quality preservice and continuing professional development experiences that prepare all general educators to work effectively with children, youth, and young adults representing a wide range of abilities and disabilities, experiences, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, attitudes, and expectations. Moreover, special educators should be trained with an emphasis on their roles in inclusive schools and community settings. They also must learn the importance of establishing ambitious goals for their students and of using appropriate means of monitoring the progress of children, youth, and young adults.

ADOPTED BY THE DELEGATE ASSEMBLY, 1993,
San Antonio, Texas

CONCERNS ABOUT THE FULL INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN REGULAR EDUCATION CLASSROOMS

prepared by the Council for Learning Disabilities

The Board of Trustees of the Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD) SUPPORTS schools reform efforts that enhance the education of all students, including those with learning disabilities (LD). The Council SUPPORTS the education of students with LD in general education classrooms when deemed appropriate by the Individual Education Program (IEP) team. Such inclusion efforts require the provision of needed support services in order to be successful.

One policy that the Council CANNOT SUPPORT is the indiscriminate full-time placement of ALL students with LD in the regular education classroom, a policy often referred to as "full inclusion." CLD has grave concerns about any placement policy that ignores a critical component of special education service delivery: Program placement of each student should be based on an evaluation of that student's individual needs. The Council CANNOT SUPPORT any policy that minimized or eliminates service options designed to enhance the education of students with LD and that are guaranteed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

From Council for Learning Disabilities.(1993). Concerns about the full inclusion of students with learning disabilities in regular education classrooms. Learning Disability Quarterly, 16(2), 126. Copyright 1993 by the Council for Learning Disabilities Reprinted by permission.

Note. Approved by the Board of Trustees, April 19, 1993.

INCLUSION: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES?

prepared by the Division for Learning Disabilities (DLD) of The Council for Exceptional Children

What Is the Law?

Free appropriate public education is required by law for students with specific learning disabilities:
...IDEA, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
...504, Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act.
Availability of a continuum of placement options is required by law:

o Special classes provide intensive, highly individualized instruction;

o Resource help provides specific skill instruction daily or several times each week focused on individual needs;

o Consultation provides support to general education teachers who have students with learning disabilities;

o Accommodations and modifications in the general classroom provide the minor support needed for individuals to meet group expectations.

Mainstreaming and Inclusion Are Not in Federal Statutes or Regulations

Placement in a least restrictive environment (LRE) is required by law.

Intensive educational services are appropriate and necessary to meet the needs of some students with learning disabilities.

Any given learning environment may be restrictive for an individual student if a continuum of options is not available:

o Without intensive daily help Maria's severe reading disability will continue to interfere with and restrict her academic success;

o Without using a word processor in his fourth grade class, Leon's ability to express his good ideas would be restricted by his inefficient and poorly formed handwriting.

Pivotal Policies

An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) ensures parent and/or student participation in establishing placement, related services and student program goals.

Options across the continuum must be available to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities:

o Mark's specific needs and IEP require that an LD specialist guide his sixth grade teacher in determining accommodations;

o Anna's specific needs and IEP require that an LD specialist guide here in an intensive, small group setting for three hours per week.

Related or supportive services must be available based on individual student need.

If a Continuum of Service Options Is Not Available to Individual Students with Specific Learning Disabilities, the Intent of IDEA Is Not Being Met

Many state and local budget allocations and reimbursements are categorical, based on the recognition that students with learning disabilities often require specialized programs, personnel, and resources.

Teacher competencies, certification standards, and licensure criteria identify specific professional skills that are critical to effective teaching of students with learning disabilities.

Implications for Practice

A regular classroom setting cannot provide the specific and/or intensive instructional services appropriate for some students with learning disabilities.

Students with learning disabilities who are placed in general education classrooms will need consultation, support services, and/or direct services from an LD specialist at varying points in their school careers to be successful.

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The IEP must be formulated prior to determination of the appropriate placement option.

General education teachers can assist students with learning disabilities by using appropriate accommodations and auxiliary aids in the classroom.

Personnel who possess specialized skills in learning disabilities must be available to assess learning and guide general

education teachers in determining appropriate accommodations, adaptations, and aids.

Special education and general education must actively work with each family and student to maximize integration with peers and independence at home, in school, and in the workplace.

A Range of Program, Personnel, and Service Options Must Be Available to Permit Selection Based on Individual Student Needs

The different professional competencies possessed by LD specialists and general education personnel are both needed to achieve positive educational outcomes for all students with learning disabilities.

The Annual IEP Review must ensure a free, appropriate public education for each individual student with learning disabilities.

Some Current Philosophies

Mainstreaming and the regular education initiative (REI) encourage the participation of students with learning disabilities in general education classes to the extent it is appropriate to their needs and provides the least restrictive environment.

General education refers to the educational experiences provided in regular classrooms, rather than in special education settings.

Inclusion and inclusive schools refer to the placement of students with disabilities in general education buildings or classrooms.

Full inclusion is used by some people to refer to the full-time placement in general education classrooms of all students, including those with disabilities.

A "Full-Inclusion" Program as Defined by Its Advocates, Provides Placements ONLY in General Education Classes for Students with Learning Disabilities

In practice, mainstreaming, inclusion, and full inclusion are often used interchangeably.

Research Ramifications

Although statistics indicate that more than 80% of students with learning disabilities are in regular classrooms, the date included all students with learning disabilities who spend any time in regular classrooms.

There Is No Validated Body of Research to Support Large Scale Adoption of Inclusion as the Service Delivery Model for ALL Students with Learning Disabilities

Reports of studies focused on students with learning disabilities in special, resource, and general education settings are often based on preliminary findings or only partially reported.

Studies reporting the progress of students with learning disabilities in various settings are inconclusive concerning academic growth.

A number of large-scale federally funded studies targeting the issue of inclusion are in the final stages of data analysis.

Action Plan

DLD is initiating an effort to examine and analyze research and practice related to inclusion for students with learning disabilities.

Resources

Position Papers on Full Inclusion of All Students with Learning Disabilities in the Regular Education Classroom. Learning Disabilities Association of America, 1993

A Reaction to "Full Inclusion": A Reaffirmation of the Right of Students with Learning Disabilities to a Continuum of Services. National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities, 1993

POSITION PAPER ON FULL INCLUSION OF ALL STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN THE REGULAR EDUCATION CLASSROOM

prepared by the Learning Disabilities Association of America

The Learning Disabilities Association of America, LDA, is a national not-for-profit organization of parents, professionals, and persons with learning disabilities, concerned about the welfare of individuals with learning disabilities. During the 1990-91 school year, 2,117,087 children in public schools in the United States were identified as having learning disabilities. This is more than fifty percent of the total number of students identified in all disability categories.

"Full inclusion," "full integration," "unified system," "inclusive education" are terms used to describe a popular policy/practice in which all students with disabilities, regardless of the nature or the severity of the disability and need for related services, receive their total education within the regular education classroom in their home school.

The Learning Disabilities Association of American does not support "full inclusion" or any policies that mandate the same placement, instruction, or treatment for ALL students with learning disabilities. Many students with learning disabilities benefit from being served in the regular education classroom. However, the regular education classroom is not the appropriate placement for a number of students with learning disabilities who may need alternative instructional environments, teaching strategies, and/or materials that cannot or will not be provided within the context of a regular classroom placement.

LDA believes that decisions regarding education placement of students with disabilities must be based on the needs of each individual student rather than administrative convenience or budgetary considerations and must be the results of a cooperative effort involving the educators, parents, and the student when appropriate.

LDA Strongly Supports the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Which Mandates:

- a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment appropriate for the student's specific learning needs.

- a team approved Individualized Education Program (IEP) that includes current functioning levels, instructional goals and objectives, placement and services decisions, and procedures for evaluation of program effectiveness.

- a placement decision must be made on an individual basis and considered only after the development of the IEP.

- a continuum of alternative placements to meet the needs of students with disabilities for special education and related services.

- a system for the continuing education of regular and special education and related services personnel to enable these personnel to meet the needs of children with disabilities.

LDA believes that the placement of ALL children with disabilities in the regular classroom is as great a violation of IDEA as is the placement of ALL children in separate classrooms on the basis of their type of disability.

LDA URGES THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EACH STATE TO MOVE DELIBERATELY AND REFLECTIVELY IN SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING, USING THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT AS A FOUNDATION--MINDFUL OF THE BEST INTERESTS OF ALL CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES.

National Association of School Psychologists

Position Statement on Inclusive Programs for Students with Disabilities

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) created significant educational opportunities for students with disabilities and established important safeguards that ensure the provision of a free, appropriate education to students with special needs. NASP strongly supports the continuation and strengthening of this mandate. NASP also recognizes the need to continually evaluate the effectiveness of all aspects of our educational system and to promote reform when needed.

Problems with the current system

NASP also recognizes that the special education system that evolved under this mandate includes a number of problems that create unintended negative outcomes for some students. These include:

- a referral and evaluation system that does not function as originally intended. Some of the weaknesses of this system include: 1) an inability to reliably differentiate among categories of students with disabilities; 2) a lack of evidence that students grouped by category learn differently or are taught differently; and 3) a classification system that lacks reliability, utility, and acceptance by many parents and professionals.

- inequities in implementation of the least restrictive environment provisions of IDEA. Data suggests that the restrictiveness of many special education placements is not based upon the severity of students' disabilities but may instead result from the configuration of the service delivery system that is available in the community.

- concerns that traditional special education programs are not effective in terms of learner outcomes.

- overly restrictive special education programs housed in separate schools or "cluster" sites that result in social segregation and disproportionate numbers of students with disabilities being grouped together. For example, some students, especially those with more severe disabilities, must attend separate schools to receive appropriate special services. Many parents and professionals feel that it is inherently inequitable that some students must leave their neighborhood schools and communities to receive appropriate services.

A call for inclusive schools

NASP, in its continuing commitment to promote more effective educational programs for ALL students, advocates the development of inclusive programs for students with disabilities. Inclusive programs are those in which students, regardless of the severity of their disability, receive appropriate specialized instruction and related services within an age-appropriate general education classroom in the school that they would attend if they did not have a disability. **NASP believes that carefully designed inclusive programs represent a viable and legitimate alternative on the special education continuum that must be examined for any student who requires special education.**

Potential benefits

Some of the benefits of inclusive programs include:

- typical peers serving as models for students with disabilities
- the development of natural friendships within the child's home community
- learning new skills within natural environments, facilitating generalization of skills
- students with disabilities existing in "natural" proportions within the school community
- all students learning to value diversity
- general education classrooms that are better able to meet the needs of all students as a result of additional instructional resources, a more flexible curriculum, and adapted instructional delivery systems.

Developing inclusive programs

In advocating for the development of these programs, NASP takes the position that:

- Inclusive programs must provide all the services needed to ensure that students make consistent social and academic gains.
- General education teachers, special education teachers, school psychologists, other related services providers, and parents must collaborate to ensure appropriate services for all students and to ensure that all programs are based upon a careful analysis of each student's needs.
- Outcome-based data on inclusive program must be collected to ensure that students with and without disabilities are making consistent educational progress.

- All educators involved in implementing inclusive programs must participate in planning and training activities. Knowledge and skills in effective collaboration, curriculum adaptation, developing supportive social relationships, and restructuring special services are but a few of the areas in which skills are needed. Training based upon the needs of the staff involved in planning these programs is essential.

The role of the school psychologist

School psychologists can provide effective leadership in the development of inclusive programs. School psychologists have training and experience in collaborative consultation, disabilities, intervention design and curriculum adaptation, modification of learning environments, program evaluation, and other issues critical to effective inclusive programs. Because of this expertise, school psychologists are in a unique position to assist schools in assessing student needs, reallocating existing resources, and restructuring service delivery systems to better meet the educational and mental health needs of all students. School psychologists can foster the development of inclusive schools by:

- providing meaningful support and consultation to teachers and other educators implementing inclusive programs;

- distributing articles and research to fellow educators and district committees responsible for educational restructuring;

- leading or serving as members of groups that are evaluating or restructuring education programs;

- planning and conducting staff development programs that support inclusion;

- providing information on needed changes to legislators and state and federal policy makers;

- collecting and analyzing program evaluation and outcome-based student data.

Changing our schools

NASP recognizes that the current framework of special education policies and regulations is often incompatible with inclusive programs. Consequently, NASP joins with the National Association of State Boards of Education in calling for a fundamental shift in the policies which drive our compensatory education system. Changes are required in:

- The system used to identify and evaluate students with special needs. Categorical labelling systems are not only unreliable and stigmatizing, they are unnecessary in an inclusive system.

- The current special education funding system. The link between funding and placements must be served. Many aspects of the funding system are driven by labels and program locations rather than by student needs.

NASP recognizes that the shift toward more inclusive schools will require profound changes in the ways in which schools are organized. We are committed to working with parents, other professional groups, and state and national policymakers in creating new funding and regulatory mechanisms that promote effective programs with neighborhood schools and ensure that students with special needs continue to receive appropriate resources. We endorse a process of planned change that involves all stakeholders in research, planning, and training to ensure that our nation's schools can attain excellence for all of our children.

--Adopted by the NASP Delegate Assembly, April 17, 1993.

National Association of State Boards of Education

Resolution 94-6: Equal Educational Opportunity

B. Students with Special Needs

1. To ensure equal educational opportunities, services should be provided for special student needs. Learning programs should identify and address the individual needs and learning styles of all students, including those who are disabled, disadvantaged, migrant, gifted or talented, parenting or pregnant, minority or of limited English proficiency.

2. State boards should ensure that policies are developed and implemented which guarantee that all students are educated in school environments that include rather than exclude them. School environments encompass all curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular programs and activities. Inclusion means that all children must be educated in supported, heterogenous, age-appropriate, natural, child-focused school environments for the purpose of preparing them for full participation in our diverse and integrated society.

APPROPRIATE INCLUSION

prepared by the National Education Association

The National Education Association is committed to equal educational opportunity, the highest quality education, and a safe learning environment for all students. The Association supports and encourages **appropriate inclusion. Appropriate inclusion** is characterized by practices and programs that provide for the following on a sustained basis:

- A full continuum of placement options and services within each option. Placement and services must be determined for each option. Placement and services must be determined for each student by a team that includes all stakeholders and must be specified in the Individualized Education Program.

- Appropriate professional development, as part of normal work activity, of all educators and support staff associated with such programs. Appropriate training must also be provided for administrators, parents, and other stakeholders.

- Adequate time, as part of the normal school day, to engage in coordinated and collaborative planning on behalf of all students.

- Class sizes that are responsive to student needs.

- Staff and technical assistance that is specifically appropriate to student and teacher needs. Inclusion practices and programs that lack these fundamental characteristics are inappropriate and must end.

NEA-CEC-AASA STATEMENT ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPECIAL EDUCATION AND GENERAL EDUCATION

prepared by The National Education Association, The Council for Exceptional Children, and the American Association of School Administrators

The National Education Association (NEA), *The council for Exceptional Children* (AASA) recognize and commend the significant growth and improvement that has occurred over the past decade in the provision of special education and related services to exceptional children as a result of the efforts of educators and other advocates. Past school practices of excluding some exceptional students from educational opportunity have been all but eliminated. Most exceptional students now have available, protect by law, a free appropriate public education guaranteeing them the special education and related services they need. The age ranges of exceptional children served have expanded with increasing focus on interventions in the very earliest years to education programs extending through age 21. Further, we are pleased with the growing collaborative efforts on the part of general educators and special educators which have led to increasing integration, where appropriate, of exceptional children with other children.

We are, however, concerned about trends and events which we believe to be regressive to the continued improvement of efforts to meet the special educational needs of exceptional children. Recent education reform movements have focused on increased performance standards for students and changes in the ways professional educators are trained and evaluated. While many of these reforms are having a positive impact on education as a whole, they are often insensitive to the needs of students for whom the standard curriculum and approaches to learning may not be appropriate. Similarly, some recent efforts to reform the professional preparation of educators have not taken into consideration the need for highly qualified special educators. We are also concerned that limited educational resources are constraining educational alternatives and quality of education for all students, and we are particularly concerned that limited special education resources are resulting in increased class sizes and case loads, reduced related services, referral backlogs,and strained relationships between educators and educators and parents. Finally, we are concerned about a growing insensitivity on the part of some public officials and advocates to the unique learning needs of exceptional children, the fundamental right for placement decision to be based on the individual needs of each exceptional child, and the capability of all schools and educators to meet the educational needs of exceptional children.

Because of our longstanding commitment to ensuring all exceptional children quality, free appropriate public education and our concern over recent movements that may be counterproductive to this goal, we urge the members of our organizations and other advocates to increase their advocacy on behalf of exceptional children in accordance with the following principles.

The *National Association*, the *Council for Exceptional Children*, and the *American Association of School Administrators* believe that:

1. The strength of our education system is in its diversity--diversity of students, professionals, and learning environments. Exceptional students, be they handicapped or gifted and talented, are one group of diverse learners both in terms of what they need to learn and how they can best learn. Special educators are the educational professionals qualified to provide specially designed instruction to exceptional children who require such instruction, and special education programs are an integral part of the necessary diverse education provided to children.

2. Some children with exceptionalities can benefit from the instruction provided by general education, but many exceptional children are not able to benefit from some or all of such instruction because of their unique learning styles or because they require a differentiated curriculum.

3. Decisions about the appropriate education for an exceptional child must be individually determined; conducted in a manner that protects the rights of the child and the persons who work with the child; considerate of the child's educational needs, of home, school and community relationships, and of personal preferences; and made with the active involvement of the varied professionals, including teachers, who have knowledge about the needs of the child and the educational environment in which the child might be placed.

4. The professional and legal principle of least restrictive environment, within the context of individual decision making, assures each exceptional child access to a full continuum of quality special education alternatives. Each child must have the alternatives which are most educationally appropriate to his or her needs.

5. Efforts on the part of professionals, parents, consumers, and other advocates over the past several decades have led to greater integration of exceptional children on

school campuses. We call for continued efforts in this regard to the degree that they are consistent with the individual educational needs of the exceptional child, the educational needs of the other children with whom the child will be educated, and the ability of the professionals involved to provide the education all of the children require.

6. The critical components of ensuring exceptional children the quality education they require are an adequate supply of qualified special education and related services personnel; the appropriate conditions under which to practice; sufficient instructional resources; and adequate federal, state, and local funding. Recognizing the unique role the federal government plays in this regard, we call upon the federal government to focus its resources on supporting and training of special education and related services personnel who meet state and professionally recognized standards; conducting research and development activities leading to the availability of improved technology, media, and materials that can be used effectively by special education and related services personnel; and increasing its financial obligations to the support of special education services.

7. Since many exceptional children will receive some of their education from non-special education professionals, we urge professional preparation programs, states, and school districts to provide such personnel with increased learning opportunities to improve their knowledge and understanding of exceptionality so they can facilitate the participation of exceptional children in their classrooms and work as a team with special educators.

8. Collaborative efforts among special educators, other members of the educational system, and various public and private agencies can help improve and expand the services available to exceptional children and, we hope, improve and expand the services available to all children. We encourage the further development of collaborative efforts that appropriately and effectively utilize professional and other resources at the local level.

Note. May 13, 1987.

A REACTION TO FULL INCLUSION: A REAFFIRMATION OF THE RIGHT OF STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES TO A CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

prepared by the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities

The National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (NJCLD) supports many aspects of school reform. However, one aspect of school reform that the NJCLD cannot support is the idea that *all* students with learning disabilities must be served only in regular education classrooms, frequently referred to as *full inclusion*. **The Committee believes that *full inclusion*, when defined this way, violates the rights of parents and students with disabilities as mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).**

Because each student with learning disabilities has unique needs, an individualized program must be tailored to meet those needs. For one student, the program may be provided in the regular classroom; yet for another student, the regular classroom may be an inappropriate placement. Therefore, the NJCLD supports the use of a continuum of services and rejects the arbitrary placement of all students in any one setting.

In *Issues in the Delivery of Educational Services to Individuals with Learning Disabilities* (1982) ... the NJCLD stated its support and commitment to "a continuum of education placements, including the regular education classroom that must be available to all students with learning disabilities and must be flexible enough to meet their changing needs." This was reaffirmed in 1991 ... in *Providing Appropriate Education for Students with Learning Disabilities in Regular Education Classrooms*, which recommended that public and private education agencies should "establish system-wide and state-based plans for educating students with learning disabilities in the regular education classroom when such placement is appropriate. The responsibility for developing plans must be shared by regular and special educators, parents, and student consumers of the services. Once developed, a plan must be supported at all levels of the educational system."

In summary, the NJCLD supports educational reform and efforts to restructure schools. As stated in "School Reform: Opportunities for Excellence and Equity for Individuals with Learning Disabilities" (1992, see *Newsbriefs* Jan/Feb 1992, p. 3), "NJCLD demonstrates a deep concern and desire that parents, professionals, and policy makers work cooperatively in planning and implementing reforms. We strongly urge that strategies be developed within the reform movement to improve education for students with learning disabilities." As these strategies are

developed, it is necessary to ensure that each student with a learning disability is provided a continuum of service options that will guarantee a free, appropriate public education based on the student's individual needs.

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Note: This position paper was developed by the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities and approved by the member organizations, January 1993.